BAI Launches Public Consultation on Code of Fairness, Objectivity and Impartiality in News

Submitted by paulmeade [1] on 1 February 2012 - 5:14pm

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) has today (1 February, 2012) launched a public consultation on a Draft Code of Fairness, Objectivity and Impartiality in News and Current Affairs.

The Broadcasting Act 2009 requires that broadcasters ensure that all news broadcast is reported and presented in an objective and impartial manner without any expression of the broadcaster?s own views. The Act also requires that the treatment of current affairs programming, including matters which are either of public controversy or the subject of public debate, is fair to all interests concerned and presented in an objective and impartial manner without any expression of his or her own views.

The deadline for submitting responses is 5pm on 14 March 2012.

Section 42 of the Act requires the BAI to develop codes governing the standards and practices to be observed by broadcasters. The BAI has therefore developed this draft code and is inviting responses from broadcasters, journalists, political parties, voluntary and professional organisations and members of the public.

The draft code sets out the underpinning principles and a range of more specific rules under key headings that have been developed by the BAI. The principles deal with such matters as fairness; objectivity and impartiality; accuracy and responsiveness; and transparency and accountability.

Launching the public consultation today, the Chairperson of the BAI, Bob Collins, said: ?This Code will assist broadcasters to meet the statutory obligations placed on them by Section 39 of the Broadcasting Act 2009. It will also assist viewers and listeners to determine whether the news and current affairs material they see and hear meets the standards to which the Code aspires?.

?In preparing the draft, we have tried to balance the right of broadcasters to present news and current affairs in an interesting and robust manner that promotes the public interest, with the need to ensure fairness, objectivity and impartiality for those who may be the subject of such broadcasts.?

In devising the rules, the Authority also took into account the European Convention on Human Rights, and in particular, the provisions relating to freedom of expression, the right to privacy and the securing of rights without any discrimination on any ground. The proposed rules and consultation document are available at www.bai.ie [2]. The deadline for submitting responses is 5pm on 14 March, 2012.

Download a pdf copy of the consultation document below:

English [3]

Irish [4]

The BAI will undertake a mail-out to wider stakeholders and will use social media, as well as traditional

media, to promote the consultation around the proposed rules.

http://www.bai.ie [5]

http://www.facebook.com/BAIreland [6]

http://twitter.com/BAItweets [7]

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